

Meeting: Audit Committee

Date: 6th February 2023

Wards Affected: None

Report Title: Torbay Council's Risk Management Policy

Is the decision a key decision? No

When does the decision need to be implemented? Immediately

Cabinet Member Contact Details: Councillor Carter, Cabinet Member for Corporate and Community Services, Christine.carter@torbay.gov.uk

Supporting Officer Contact Details: Eve Bates, Senior Performance & Risk Officer, eve.bates@torbay.gov.uk

1. Introduction

1.1 With the support of Tony Rose - Devon Audit Partnership Manager, the Council's Senior Performance and Risk Officer Eve Bates has been implementing a series of actions to improve the council's approach to its risk management.

1.2 To date the significant improvements, include:

- Devising a new risk management policy, framework and supporting documentation
- Cleansing and reconfiguring the existing risk management software (SPAR.net) ready for use
- Training 70+ managers and staff on risk management, the council's framework and how to use the software
- Hosting a risk training / workshop session for the Senior Leadership Team which focused on strategic and corporate risk identification

1.3 This report requests that the committee adopt the new Risk Policy.

2. Risk Policy

2.1 The risk policy is the key document that sets out the council's commitment and how it intends to manage risk within its business activities. The policy includes the legislative requirements, priorities for the council, an explanation of our registers, how we score risks, our current tolerance thresholds and details on roles and responsibilities.

2.2 The policy contains eight objectives and states that the council will:

- Embed risk management into the culture and decision making of the council
- Integrate risk management into key business processes to ensure there is a consistent approach and that the risks are managed effectively

- Manage risk in accordance with best practice, whilst developing an approach tailored to meet the council's own needs
- Continually identify new and future risks that may impact on the council
- Work with partners, providers and contractors to develop awareness and a common understanding of the council's expectations on risk management
- For the cost of risk to be reduced and for assets, people and the council's reputation to be protected
- For risk registers to be up to date, regularly maintained and challenged
- Ensure effective monitoring and management information, reporting on the key risks facing the council through the democratic process

2.3 The policy also states the council's priorities as being:

- To provide early warning on key / emerging matters to enable transparent, timely decision-making and intervention at appropriate levels
- To raise awareness of the need for risk management by all those involved in the delivery of the council's services
- To take actions, where appropriate, to minimise the likelihood of risks occurring and/or reducing the severity of consequences should risks occur
- To ensure that risks are monitored on an ongoing basis by Senior Management and reported regularly to the Audit Committee

3. Risk Framework and Impact & Probability Guide

3.1 As part of the meeting, the Senior Performance and Risk Officer will present the council's risk framework and officer impact & probability guide. This will support members to understand how the policy will be delivered and aid their overall understanding of our risk processes.

4. Recommendation(s) / Proposed Decision

- (i) That Audit Committee recommend to Cabinet the immediate adoption and implementation of the council's new Risk Policy attached as Appendix One.

Appendices

Appendix 1: Risk Policy – February 2023

Background Documents

Report clearance:	This report has been reviewed and approved by:	Date:
Chief Executive	Anne-Marie Bond	22 nd November 2022
Monitoring Officer	Amanda Barlow	25 th January 2023
Chief Finance Officer	Martin Phillips	22 nd November 2022
Relevant Director/Assistant Director	Matthew Fairclough-Kay	22 nd November 2022

Section 1: Background Information

1.	<p>What is the proposal / issue? Torbay Council needs to have an up to date, adopted risk policy. The policy is a critical document that supports the council's risk management processes.</p>
2.	<p>What is the current situation? The council's risk management framework dated December 2016 is out of date and no longer in keeping with the council's current processes.</p> <p>The new policy reflects the council's risk management practices and processes.</p>
3.	<p>What options have been considered? Improvement to the council's performance and risk management processes was identified as a project within the existing Community and Corporate Plan under Council Fit For The Future. A revised, adopted Risk Policy is one of the actions required as detailed in the risk improvement plan.</p>
4.	<p>What is the relationship with the priorities within the Partnership Memorandum and the Council's Principles?</p> <p>Priorities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• A Council Fit for the Future
5.	<p>How does this proposal/issue contribute towards the Council's responsibilities as corporate parents? This policy has no direct contribution to corporate parenting. However, Improving the council's overall risk management processes will support all services including Children's.</p>
6.	<p>How does this proposal/issue tackle poverty, deprivation and vulnerability? This policy has no direct contribution to tackling poverty, deprivation or vulnerability, however the risk management processes will ensure critical issues such as these are captured strategically and mitigations are identified and actioned.</p>
7.	<p>How does the proposal/issue impact on people with learning disabilities? This policy has no direct contribution to impact people with learning disabilities, however the risk management processes will ensure critical issues such as these are captured strategically and mitigations are identified and actioned.</p>

8.	<p>Who will be affected by this proposal and who do you need to consult with? How will the Council engage with the community? How can the Council empower the community?</p> <p>This policy does not require public consultation as it is an internal facing policy document. The policy will apply to staff and members who will adopt the content within their existing working arrangements.</p>
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Section 2: Implications and Impact Assessment

9.	What are the financial and legal implications? There are no anticipated legal implications.
10.	What are the risks? There are no anticipated risks associated with the implementation of this policy.
11.	Public Services Value (Social Value) Act 2012 Not applicable
12.	What evidence / data / research have you gathered in relation to this proposal? The policy was drafted in collaboration with the Chief Executive Officer and her Senior Leadership Team. The policy was shared with the Devon Audit Partnership Manager (Tony Rose) and his Risk Lead (Kate MacDowall) for comment before bringing forward the final draft for approval.
13.	What are key findings from the consultation you have carried out? No formal consultation was held, however, the policy was shared with DAP for comment and found to be 'good' with a couple of minor tweaks made to wording.
14.	Amendments to Proposal / Mitigating Actions Not applicable

Equality Impacts

15.	<p>Identify the potential positive and negative impacts on specific groups</p> <p>The Risk Policy does not have any equality impacts on the below groups.</p>																																																				
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